

## HANDOUT 11

### TURNING AROUND CHRONICALLY LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS: PLANNING TEMPLATE FOR WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

Planning templates are designed to help technical assistance providers work with educators. This template can help school principals and leadership teams translate the recommendations of the IES Practice Guide *Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools* into actions to promote the identification of school needs and practices that meet the needs of all students and staff.

AREA OF SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY	CURRENT STATUS			NEXT STEPS
	Already in Place	Not Feasible/ Inappropriate	Potential Areas to Develop	
<b>A. School Leadership</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The principal communicates to staff and the community the urgency of, and specific plans for making dramatic changes from business as usual.</li> <li>2. The principal uses leadership teams or otherwise delegates responsibility, to involve teachers in the direction of the reform and signal the expectation that all staff will be involved.</li> <li>3. The principal is an instructional leader, modeling, monitoring, and otherwise supporting classroom instruction.</li> <li>4. The principal works with the LEA to obtain waivers for district policies if necessary for school turnaround (e.g., waiving some personnel assignment policies).</li> <li>5. The principal works with the teachers' unions to obtain waivers or changes to contracts if necessary for school turnaround.</li> </ol>				

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6. The principal and staff have identified and pursued potential resources, including state and federal grant monies, to support recommended practices (e.g., professional development, instructional and planning resources and materials).				
<b>B. Setting Standards and Expectations for Achievement</b>  1. The principal establishes the priority areas for instructional focus and specific short- and long-term goals, and conveys these to all school staff.  2. The principal conveys progress towards goals to staff and provides clear direction when progress is not being made.  3. The principal and teachers review the curricula to align them with state and local standards.				
<b>C. Providing Research-Based and Effective Instruction in Support of State and District Standards</b>  1. The curriculum is implemented consistently across the school.  2. Teachers collect and analyze data on student progress frequently (e.g., weekly).  3. Teachers adjust instruction to address gaps in class and individual student learning.  4. Teachers differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students.				

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<b>D. Supporting Instruction in the Classroom</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The principal schedules common planning time for teachers to evaluate student progress and develop common lesson plans.</li> <li>2. The principal examines school- and class-level data on student achievement to identify gaps in student learning.</li> <li>3. The principal and/or teacher leaders provide feedback to teachers about their instruction.</li> </ol>				
<b>E. Recruiting, Retaining, Supporting High-Quality Staff</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The principal reviews the strengths and weaknesses of staff against the needs of the school and the direction of the reform.</li> <li>2. The principal identifies alternate roles, counsels out, or otherwise relocates teachers who are not able or willing to serve their designated role in the school.</li> <li>3. The principal evaluates teacher candidates against the needs of the school and direction of the reform.</li> <li>4. The principal works with the LEA and community to obtain incentives and district policy waivers to draw—and retain—highly qualified teachers.</li> <li>5. Teachers receive training on recommended practices for turning around low-performing schools.</li> </ol>				

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6. The principal ensures that teachers receive targeted professional development, differentiated according to each teacher's needs.				
<b>F. Supervision and Monitoring of Instruction</b> 1. The principal visits teachers' classrooms to monitor instruction and provide feedback regularly (e.g., daily or weekly). 2. The principal discusses class and individual student achievement data with individual teachers or teacher teams regularly (e.g., weekly or monthly)				
<b>G. Using Data for Planning and Accountability</b> 1. The principal uses school-level achievement data to prioritize school goals and develop school turnaround plans. 2. The principal collects and analyzes school-level achievement data to track progress towards school goals regularly (e.g., weekly). 3. The principal plans professional development for individual teachers and the staff overall to address gaps identified in the data.				

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<b>H. Engaging Families and Community</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The principal publicly conveys the new direction of the school to families and the community.</li> <li>2. The school establishes partnerships with community agencies, businesses, and colleges/universities, etc. to obtain resources for teachers to implement practices.</li> <li>3. The school develops partnerships with local postsecondary institutions that have the expertise to support low-performing schools in their turnaround efforts.</li> </ol>				
<b>I. Ensuring Safe and Supportive Learning Environments for All Students</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The principal and teachers create a classroom and school climate of high expectations for student achievement.</li> <li>2. The physical environment of the school reflects the focus on student learning (e.g., learning standards and student work visible in the halls).</li> <li>3. The principal sets clear expectations for student behavior, and implements policies consistent with those expectations.</li> <li>4. School-based activities outside of the school day (e.g., clubs) provide additional opportunities for student learning in prioritized areas.</li> </ol>				